

Bush Picks CIA Career Man As Agency Deputy

When President Ford last fall named former Republican National Chairman George Bush to direct the Central Intelligence Agency, he asked Bush to seek out the best man from inside the agency to run its day-to-day operations.

Bush took his time looking around, but last week his choice for deputy director was announced by the White House. He is E. Henry Knoche, 51, a 23-year veteran of the agency with a background in intelligence analysis. If confirmed by the Senate, he will succeed Lt. Gen. Vernon A. Walters, a career Army officer and friend of former President Nixon. Walters has held the No. 2 CIA job since 1972.

Knoche (rhymes with rocky) is described by associates as a relaxed, soft-spoken administrator with a reputation for fairness and efficiency. "He's a get-things-done, good to work with, and very popular within the agency," says one official.

Those qualities will be important assets in meeting his major challenge: to restore the morale and credibility of the CIA, which has been battered by the Watergate scandal and two major congressional investigations. Knoche's role will be enhanced by the Administration's recent reorganization of the intelligence community, which gives Bush expanded powers as chief of Government intelligence and makes the CIA deputy director the operating head of that agency.